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Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 2 September 1998 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon the instruction of my Government, I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement on the support and assistance of the Republic of Albania to secessionism and terrorism in Kosovo and Metohija (see annex).

I would be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the fifty-third session of the General Assembly, under item 157 of its provisional agenda, entitled "Measures to eliminate international terrorism".

(*Signed*) Vladislav **Jovanovic**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex

Statement on the support and assistance of the Republic of Albania to secessionism and terrorism in Kosovo and Metohija

1. As early as November 1991, the Republic of Albania officially recognized the illegally proclaimed secessionist creation – the Republic of Kosovo – as a sovereign and independent State. In doing so, it committed a flagrant violation of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, recklessly breaching the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Helsinki Final Act. Unfortunately, this provocative act of the Republic of Albania, committed in wanton disregard for international law, has not been denounced and condemned by either the United Nations or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. So far, the Republic of Albania has not revoked its recognition, by which it confirms that interference in the internal affairs of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and denial of its territorial integrity and sovereignty continues to be its official policy towards the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

2. For years now, the Republic of Albania has been the main source of threats to the peace and stability of its neighbours and the entire region. The Government of the Republic of Albania has taken no effective measures to prevent terrorist activities, including armed raids, from its territory against neighbouring countries. The fact that it has no control over large tracts of its northern territory is no excuse for the failure of the Republic of Albania to carry out its international obligations as a State and a Member of the United Nations. Vis-à-vis the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the Republic of Albania has become a centre for terrorist groups and organizations to congregate, train and arm their members before infiltrating Kosovo and Metohija, the autonomous province of the Yugoslav Republic of Serbia, to carry out terrorist actions.

Fatos Nano, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Albania, qualified the countless gruesome crimes that terrorists committed in Kosovo and Metohija this year, as "acts of self-defence" by Albanians and threatened that, in the event of an escalation of violence, all Albanians will react as one single person. Ceasing violence, as he understands it, implies the possibility for the Kosovo and Metohija Albanians to establish the "Republic of Kosovo".

Political statements of the leaders of the Republic of Albania directly encourage terrorism and terrorist attacks against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Recently, Paskal Milo, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Albania, made a public concession that Albania had become a haven for international terrorists.

3. As early as 1992 to 1994, several thousand Albanians from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia were given military-terrorist training in boot camps in Albania: at Dajta, near Tirana, Labinot near Ellbasan, Surelli, Kuks, Peskopeje, Shkodra and Krum. Six-month training courses were provided by the officers of the Albanian military as instructors. The terrorists were subjected to systematic indoctrination to the effect that they were the soldiers of the "Republic of Kosovo" and that their mission was to annex it to Albania by force. At the end of the course, the terrorists signed a pledge that they would serve loyally if called up "to liberate Kosovo" and were made aware that any disclosure to the Yugoslav authorities that they had undergone the secret training would be punished by death.

Upon completion of the course, the terrorists were sent to Germany and Switzerland where they were given political asylum. Some of them returned legally to Yugoslavia, some went to Bosnia and Herzegovina during the civil war, joined the Muslim military and took an active part in the fighting. All these terrorists were managed from Albania.

The Republic of Albania made various facilities in many towns available to Kosovo and Metohija terrorists, who call themselves the "Kosovo Liberation Army". Terrorist boot camps and bases from which they are sent on terrorist missions in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are located in Tropoje, Bajram Curri, Krum, Kuks and Peskopeje. About 5,000 terrorists are quartered in the barracks in these towns either permanently or in transit. Their training completed, terrorists are broken up in groups, led to the border with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia by instructors, former officers of the Albanian military, and, allowing for the circumstances, infiltrated into the territory of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. While in training, the terrorists roam the towns freely, wearing uniforms with "Kosovo Liberation Army" insignia and carrying arms, and no effort is made to conceal or explain their presence.

For some time now, a "Kosovo Liberation Army office" has operated in Tirana as a reception centre for recruits coming over via Durres. From Tirana, they are dispatched to boot camps for training. The "office" is engaged also in procuring arms and dispatching them across the Yugoslav border into Kosovo and Metohija.

4. The role of the Republic of Albania in aiding and abetting terrorism in Kosovo and Metohija is not confined to training and arming terrorists alone; Albania is an active participant as well. About 300 active officers of the Albanian military, as well as a large number of retired officers and non-commissioned officers, have been infiltrated into Yugoslavia where they command and organize terrorist actions in Kosovo and Metohija.

Between 1 January and 25 August 1998, terrorist groups from Albania caused 87 border incidents, using firearms in 68 cases. Sixty-one terrorist groups, numbering between five to several hundred men, attempted to infiltrate the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the same period. On the night of 17 to 18 July alone, a group of 1,000 terrorists attempted to cross the Yugoslav border near the border posts of "Kosare and Djeravica" by force. A large group of 7,000 terrorists is deployed near the border, waiting to infiltrate the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and join terrorist groups in Kosovo and Metohija.

5. Since the beginning of the year, about 200 terrorists have been liquidated and about 20 captured. Several thousand pieces of miscellaneous arms have been impounded, as well as about one million bullets for automatic rifles, a large number of mortars, bazookas, recoilless cannon and various items of equipment.

6. Foreign mercenaries also are infiltrated into the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia from Albania and take part in terrorist activities in Kosovo and Metohija. Most of them are the "holy warriors" from the fundamentalist Islamic organizations from the Middle East, the "dogs of war" who committed countless atrocities in the civil war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.